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E. Jefferson Murphy

University of Massachusetts Amherst

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E. Jefferson Murphy

BANTU EDUCATION: INSTRUMENT OF POLITICAL SOCIALIZATION

IT COMES AS no surprise to anyone with even a slight interest in Africa to be told that South Africa's minority white government has, for more than twenty years, used the system of African education, which it terms formally "Bantu Education," in an effort to politically socialize millions of young Africans on terms set by the government.

Since the elaborate system of apartheid and the more current policies of "separate development" have long been recognized as means of economic, political, and social control, designed to protect and preserve the markedly advantageous position of the white community, it stands to reason that the powerful force of education for the young would be similarly used.

Yet, serious scholars of the South African scene have rarely focused on education. Political scientists have carefully examined and analyzed apartheid's instruments of political control; economists have fully and accurately anatomized the white-controlled economic system; and sociologists have minutely studied the complex patterns of segregation and social control. But neither educators nor social scientists have subjected Bantu Education to similarly rigorous scrutiny: to the extent they have shown an interest in it, they have tended to accept the arguments of its numerous critics. The result is that there is strikingly sparse literature dealing with Bantu Education and little information about precisely what it is, what it was designed to accomplish, and what its effects have so far been.

This paper is, regrettably, not the definitive answer to this de-

iciency. It is intended, however, as an overview, based on systematic analysis of the available information on curriculum and administrative structure, that may help to clarify the role of Bantu Education as an effort to provide political socialization and skills within the larger panoply of apartheid measures and institutions.

In order to set the stage, it is useful to recapitulate very briefly the historical context which gave rise to apartheid, separate development, and Bantu Education.

In 1948, when the Afrikaner peoples' National Party won a thin majority of seats in Parliament, it set about building an elaborate program which was clearly designed to perpetuate it in office and to allow it to impose on the peoples of South Africa the kind of system which it believed, in a spirit of manifest destiny, was essential to maintain the surging pace of economic development and to insure white "rights." The National Party's program, evolving over a period of several years, consisted of four major elements, if one excludes the measures taken to increase industrialization, economic growth, and general conditions for the development of a strong, affluent, modern state.

The first element was a series of adjustments of the political structure. Legislative districts were gerrymandered to give National Party candidates a larger number of seats in the next elections; the Senate was expanded by creating appointive seats; and a number of actions were taken to weaken the ability of the judicial system to contradict measures of Parliament. These efforts, combined with skillful political rhetoric and propaganda, worked with dramatic effectiveness; the National Party has reigned supreme since 1948, its opposition reduced to a splintered minority with little real hope of recapturing control of government.

The second element was a series of laws and executive orders designed to control dissent more easily. The more notorious of these acts were the Suppression of Communism Act of 1950 and a series of Preventive Detention Acts: the one, allowing the Government to declare a wide variety of actions by individuals punishable on the grounds that they contributed to the Communist cause and, thereby, threatened the overthrow of the Government by illegal means; the other, enabling the Government to detain, for long periods of time, anyone it believed to be behaving, or likely to behave, contrary to

the best interest of the state. Since 1949-50, there have been several hundred laws and measures of this nature, giving the Government a legal-appearing framework for the control of dissent which places it in the top rank of totalitarian states.

The third element of the program was designed to crystallize existing patterns of racial segregation, to draw sharper lines than had traditionally been drawn, and to erect firm barriers between each of the major racial groups. Many of the separate facilities and group areas laws were part of this thrust and were designed to restrict each racial group to designated areas. Among the more prominent were the Immorality Act, which made it a punishable offense for members of two racial groups to have sexual relations with each other or to marry, and the bizarre personal identification measures, which required each individual to have an identity card on which his or her race was designated—and which, in a number of celebrated cases, classified individuals into racial groups different from that of parents or siblings.

The fourth element of the program, appearing somewhat later in time under the *nom de plume* of separate development, purported to add an optimistic, dynamic quality to a static apartheid system abhorred by both the outside world and by most South Africans. Separate development has produced two main efforts: the homelands, or Bantustans, and Bantu Education. Under the homelands concept, Africans were classified into “nations,” based on their ethnic heritage; and each was assigned small parcels of territory within which they were to be allowed to develop “along their own lines” into self-determining states—if any way were ever found to finance economic progress in their overcrowded, eroded, infertile territory, to link together pieces of territory separated from each other by white lands, and to relieve their peoples of their absolute dependency upon the Republic’s political and economic power.

Repeatedly reminding frustrated but impotent Africans—and South Africa’s foreign critics—that “Rome wasn’t built in a day,” the Government began, in the mid-1950s, the agonizingly slow process of separate development which has finally brought the Transkei and Bophutatswana to “sovereign independence” and which has led the leadership of the other homelands to refuse to take this alluring gift.

Under the same Roman maxim, the Government introduced Bantu Education in 1954, replying to a storm of protest with the assurance that it would, in time, educate children of the several African nations to develop, both as individuals and as members of their nations, up to the highest limits of their capacities. As will be documented in a moment, the Government has acknowledged from the beginning that Bantu Education had political socialization as a major objective and defined that socialization as helping African children to develop within their own cultural heritage and, thus, to participate in the ultimate development of their nations. Before we examine Bantu Education more closely, however, it is useful to summarize briefly another set of background conditions out of which it was born.

The Afrikaner people, and their National Party, have been all too frequently stereotyped as a relatively primitive, fiercely rural society, steeped in Calvinist fundamentalism and different in many respects from other European peoples because of their long isolation in the interior of the southern African subcontinent. While there is some truth in this stereotype, it glosses over some enormously meaningful realities. Most fundamentally, it suggests that the Afrikaners may be content to lead a nineteenth century, rural-frontier existence, letting the rest of the world go by. The fact is that Afrikaners have become, during the twentieth century, almost wholly urban and are intimately and enthusiastically bound up in the South African variant of Western technological-materialistic culture. When the National Party won power in 1948, it appeared, on the surface, to be a populist movement appealing to the Afrikaner's rural heritage; in fact, it was acutely appreciative of the powerful process of industrialization that had already begun in South Africa, and it was eager to hold power in order to preside over that process.

Much more than English-speaking South Africans, the Afrikaners, with this curious blend of industrial-technological fascination and rooted-in-the-soil Africanness, perceived a threat in African social development and an urgent need to find a more lasting solution to the problem of tenuous white control. When they gained power, they wanted both to facilitate the further development of their own socio-economic system and to insure that the vastly larger African population could be kept in control; controlled, Africans are vitally important workers and consumers in the white economic system; but, progressing without firm controls, they pose, in Afrikaner perception,

a potential threat to the entire white community and all that it holds dear.

Holding these perceptions, it is unlikely that the Afrikaners, except under dire duress, would have reassigned land holdings and made available the capital needed for viable African homelands; relatively prosperous African states within South African borders would be intolerable.

By the same token, it is unlikely in the extreme that the South African Government would have designed (and financed) Bantu Education in such a way that it genuinely aided Africans to undertake their own separate development, to build up strong self-confidence and pride in self and nation, and to acquire mental qualities of initiative, entrepreneurship, and self-reliance. Africans so educated would hardly have been content to utilize their knowledge, skills, and self-reliant values in nation-building the overcrowded, eroded, unproductive patches of territory allotted to them under the homelands aspect of separate development. Nor could they have been counted on to work industriously and complacently, as legally temporary residents, in the factories, mines, offices, and shops of the white economic system. Understanding these realities the polemicists who have long questioned the South African Government's avowed objectives for Bantu Education, and the Government's chief spokesmen themselves appear to have been of two schools of thought. One school defended the proposed new system primarily as a more effective way to equip Africans to play their appropriate roles in South Africa; the other more prominent school spoke mainly of its value as a means of equipping Africans to develop "along their own lines," separately from other groups in South Africa. The latter goal was aptly characterized in the principle charge to the Eiselen Commission, a Government-appointed body whose 1951 report led to the creation of Bantu Education:

The formulation of the principles and aims of education for Natives as an independent race, in which their past and present, their inherent racial qualities, their distinctive characteristics and aptitude, and their needs under the ever changing social conditions are taken into consideration.

This charge was taken seriously by the Eiselen Commission. Its landmark report severely criticized the schools that then served African

needs, noting, *inter alia*, that they provided little agricultural education, that they imposed harsh and capricious discipline on children, and that they had no clear concept of the values and future growth of African culture, tending rather to inculcate Western values at the expense of those of African culture. Interestingly, the Report singled out university education as particularly deficient, noting that "The importance of university education for the Bantu cannot be over-emphasized, both to provide general education for leaders and to provide high grade technical men for their future economic and social development."

The Report's recommendations clearly spelled out the possible use of Bantu Education for separate development. It defined the chief aim as follows:

From the viewpoint of the whole society, the aim of Bantu Education is the development of a modern progressive culture, with social institutions which will be in harmony with one another and with the evolving conditions of life to be met in South Africa, and with the schools which must serve as effective agents in this process of development.

Among the guiding principles recommended for the new system were

- education must be coordinated with a planned program of Bantu development

- new emphasis must be placed on education of the masses to enable them to cooperate in the evolution of new social patterns and institutions

- literature should be produced in Bantu languages

- Bantu personnel should be used to the maximum to make the schools as Bantu in spirit as possible as well as to provide employment

- Bantu parents should . . . share in the control and life of the schools

- the schools should provide for the maximum development of the Bantu individual, mentally, morally, and spiritually.

Among the most interesting and revealing sections of the Report was one arguing that education for Africans needs to be different from that for Whites. The basic argument was summarized in the following paragraphs:

The Bantu child comes to school with a basic physical and psychological endowment which differs, so far as your Com-

missioners have been able to determine from the evidence set before them, so slightly, if at all from that of the European child that no special provision has to be made in educational theory or basic aims. . . . But educational practice must recognize that it has to deal with a Bantu child, *i.e.*, a child trained and conditioned in Bantu culture, endowed with a knowledge of a Bantu language and imbued with values, interests, and behaviour patterns learned at the knee of a Bantu mother. These facts must dictate to a large extent the content and methods of his early education.

When we come to the more advanced stages of schooling a more difficult set of circumstances has to be met. . . . Here the problem is largely to find an answer to the question: What type of individual should the school produce that will function to the best advantage in Bantu society?

While we would hardly compare these quaint phrasings to the ringing arguments of a Julius Nyerere defending a special kind of education for Tanzanians, it appears evident that the Eiselen Commission, at least, regarded Bantu Education as having a special relevance to what later came to be called separate development. In 1954, the then Minister of Native Affairs, Dr. H. F. Verwoerd, put the same case in somewhat different words when he stated in a Parliamentary debate that:

My department's policy is that education should stand with both feet in the reserves and have its roots in the spirit and being of Bantu society. . . . The Bantu must be guided to serve his own community in all respects. There is no place for him in the European community above the level of certain forms of labour. Within his own community, however, all doors are open. . . .

It would be redundant to continue citing Government spokesmen on the aims of Bantu Education. Suffice it to say, in this brief analysis, that the Government's control of Parliament and its power over the populace enabled it to enact the basic legislation in 1954, to terminate all pre-existing school arrangements for Africans, and to build its new system with no effective opposition. During the late 1950s and early 1960s, there was sufficiently little concern over criticism, whether internal or external, that the Government seldom even issued major pronouncements or engaged in more than perfunctory debate over the evolving new system.

As outside criticism grew more insistent during the later 1960s and the 1970s, however, and as African pressures built inside and around South Africa, the Government renewed its defense of Bantu Education, just as it expanded its arguments that the Bantustans were destined to become self-governing African nations. Bantu Education and the homelands have become the Government's principle examples of its assertion that Africans may hope for a destiny other than perpetual servitude in the white socioeconomic system.

A closer examination of what has actually evolved in Bantu Education, however, fails to corroborate the Government's claims.

Looking first at how the schools and the system of education are administered, one is struck by a contradiction between claims and reality. True to the tenets of the Eiselen Commission report, the Government has built the system on a basis of tight central control but with a superstructure of African involvement that appears to stem from the Commission's recommendation that "Bantu parents should share in the control and life of the schools."

Central control has taken the form of Parliament's vesting in the Minister of Bantu Education a range of powers that are probably greater than those enjoyed by any education minister anywhere else in the world. He has responsibility for the budget with little review powers by Parliament. He controls the training, certification, and tenure of all teachers. He presides over a Department of Bantu Education which, by his delegation, is empowered to control schools and pupil matters to the extent of expelling an individual child from school or dismissing a teacher, all without recourse in law to appeal. Further, a teacher dismissed from one school may not be employed in any other school in the country.

The senior officers of the Department were, as reported in the Annual Report for 1974, all Europeans. Numerous African inspectors and sub-inspectors have been employed; but they are under the close supervision of 71 senior officials, none of whom is African. This situation has, since about 1965, begun to change in the homelands, especially in the Transkei, where there are African Ministers of Education and a number of senior African administrators. Yet even in the Transkei, the top administrators are predominantly European; and all of the rules, regulations, and curricular requirements of the Department of Bantu Education are in force except where specific

negotiations have led to changes approved by the Minister of Bantu Education.

In the 87 percent of South Africa that is not "homelands," there is considerably less Africanization of administrative posts, especially at senior level. The Government has heralded the extensive involvement of African parents and community leaders in some 500 school boards and 6,000 school committees in the urban areas, reporting in 1974 that over 50,000 Africans served on these bodies. Even a casual reading of the official regulations of the Department, however, reveals that these African school boards and committees (most of whose members are appointed, rather than elected, by the Department or by a Government-paid chief in consultation with the Department) have considerable responsibility and virtually no authority. They are responsible for setting school fees and financing those costs of schools that are not met by Government subsidy, but they can expend what they collect only with the approval of the Department. They are expected to raise extra funds for building and physical plant improvement but, to a large extent, are prohibited from raising these funds outside the impoverished African community. Gifts from corporations or organizations, for example, cannot be accepted unless approved by the Minister; and most reported cases of gifts offered have been refused by the Minister.

The Eiselen Commission's recommendations that Bantu Education be related to the culture and institutions of African society notwithstanding, the African school boards and committees have no responsibility for, nor control over, curriculum; that is reserved specifically to the Department of Bantu Education and is set forth in official syllabi issued in Pretoria.

In short, there has been created an elaborate structure of administration and control in which African faces, in the classroom and on local boards and committees, are highly visible. But all significant power remains, after twenty-two years, in the hands of the Minister of Bantu Education and the senior white officials of his Department. Under mounting pressure, the Government has made some concessions in the homelands but, elsewhere, has yielded little. The recent riots in Soweto over student refusal to allow the imposition of Afrikaans as the medium of instruction in secondary schools have produced, at considerable loss of life and other suffering, one of the

few cases in which the Government has responded, under severe pressure, to African opinion.

It is in the area of the curriculum, however, where an even more important test of the Government's objectives in Bantu Education is found. What teachers are required to teach, in other words, most clearly suggests how Bantu Education is designed to be an instrument of political socialization toward Government-defined ends.

A case in point is the prescribed timetable, which sets forth the time per week to be devoted to each subject, year by year, through the first eight years of school. In order of the amount of time devoted to each subject, the curriculum is as follows for grades three through eight (the first two grades are not included since pupils go to school only half a day):

Subject	Hours per Week
Afrikaans language	4.3
English language	4.3
Arithmetic	3.5
Home language	3.3
Religious education, devotions	2.9
Arts, crafts, gardening	2.5
Social studies	2.0
Health & Physical Education	1.9
Music	1.7
Writing	.8
General Science	.8
TOTAL CLASS TIME PER WEEK	28.0

This timetable is important because it suggests the relative importance the Government attaches to each subject, for African children, during the all-important first eight years; very few Africans get beyond the eighth grade into junior or senior high school.

It is striking to note how much time is devoted to Afrikaans and English, the two official languages of the Republic: together, they account for nearly one-third of the time spent in the classroom during the first eight years of school. If one assumed, following the emphasis placed in Government rhetoric on the homelands and separate development, that most Africans are expected to develop themselves and their communities "along their own lines," it would seem inappropriate to spend so much time on two languages that are useful primarily for communication between black and white and for em-

ployment in white commercial, industrial, and agricultural enterprise. This heavy language emphasis suggests, on the contrary, that it is expected that most Africans will spend a goodly portion of their lives working in the white areas.

It is equally striking that so little time (two hours per week) is devoted to social studies, the curricular area in which one would expect Africans destined for separate development to learn about their own culture, their own history, their own institutions, and how communities are organized and developed. Social studies is apparently regarded as of relatively low curricular priority, however, receiving even less time than religion.

Numerous other conclusions might be drawn from thoughtful study of the curricular timetable, but it must suffice at this point to take note of the strong emphasis on European language and the low priority accorded social studies and move on to an examination of what the syllabi require the teachers to cover within the time allotted.

In this process, one is inevitably attracted to such subjects as religion and social studies since they are of major importance in the communication of values and the teaching of character development. In any curriculum, they are the subjects which lend themselves most directly to political socialization.

As a rough working hypothesis, one would posit that religion would stress values of service to one's society, a progressive work ethic, the need for individual assumption of responsibility, and concepts of the divine promise for both the individual and the society, in addition to religious concepts about the nature of God and man that reflect the deeper theological and cosmological structure of the culture.

Religion, as specified in the Bantu Education syllabus for the first eight years of school, does indeed stress the inculcation of values—but the values of a fundamentalist, Calvinist church rather than those of either African religious systems or “protestant ethic” type faiths of the modern West. There is strict admonition that the Bible should be the teacher's primary text, and approximately three-fourths of all the chapters and lessons in the syllabi refer to the Old Testament. Themes to be addressed by the teacher each year are specified; only one year's theme deals with the New Testament and the specific teachings of Jesus Christ, while the other seven deal with

God and cite Old Testament texts overwhelmingly. The theme for Standard VI, the highest grade achieved by most Africans, is entitled "The demands that God makes in His Love."

These demands, according to the instructions in the syllabus, are centered on strict obedience to God's laws and to those of the mundane authorities who govern by His will; humility and respect for elders and leaders; hard work; lawfulness; honesty; and cheerfulness in one's role in life—which, the teacher is asked to teach, is ordained by God in the divine scheme of things. At various points in the syllabus, authority is attributed to chiefs, elders, and the State. At no point in the syllabus is there any mention of those sections of either the Old or New Testaments which adjure the individual to develop his individual potentialities, and there is no mention of Christ's teachings in the realm of social or ethical protest.

Overall, there are two marked conclusions to be drawn from an examination of the religion syllabus. First, religion is taught very much along the lines of the Calvinist Dutch Reformed Church's teachings, with singular emphasis on authority, submissiveness, and duty. Second, there is a total void in respect to African religious concepts or values. This, while understandable in schools established by Christian missions, is notable in State schools which are said to be instruments designed to educate Africans to develop along their own lines.

Social studies which begins in the third and fourth grades as Environment Studies and becomes Social Studies in the fifth through eighth grades, is the curricular aggregation in which history, geography, political studies, basic economics, and citizenship or civics are taught. Its aims for the six-year curriculum are spelled out most interestingly in the introduction to the Environment Studies syllabus, which I quote only in its most relevant part:

. . . (The pupil) should, therefore, know how his own people and others earn a living . . . and he should be convinced that he must work, if he wishes to lead a useful and contented life.

. . . The knowledge which he gains should encourage him to take into consideration constantly the interests of other people. . . . He should be convinced that he cannot live and act as a detached individual in society, but that he is de-

pendent on other people, and they in turn are dependent on him. The maintenance of good relations will depend on his attitude, and the good habits of conduct that he has developed in association with people of his own group, as well as with the people of other sections of the population . . . teaching should lead the child to do naturally, and therefore willingly, what society has prescribed as correct, good and commendable.

. . . the following points must be borne in mind:

. . . The pupils must be led to a high ethical standard by practicing cooperation, courtesy, personal neatness, helpfulness, consideration, faithfulness, steadfastness, and responsibility.

. . . Good working and study habits must be acquired and cultivated.

The topics listed for coverage in the Environment Studies periods include many which are unassailable by any standard, since they deal with weather, seasons, roads, transportation, and similar realities. Yet, even these have a special slant, designed quite obviously for an African child who is likely, in future workaday life, to be doing a considerable amount of travel between local and cosmopolitan areas. Transport and Communications, for example, are to cover the following:

How the pupil can travel in the district; railways and motor services; other means of travel. . . . How goods are sent to and from our town. A visit to a station or bus halt and observation of the various activities there, the loading and unloading of goods and luggage, buying tickets, arriving and departing. . . .

As the syllabus moves into the several areas of social studies in the fifth through eighth grades, it appears to devote roughly three-fourths of its attention to geographical, historical, economic, and political facets of the Republic of South Africa. At no point is there provision for the study of the rest of Africa, except for a brief section on physical geography; conspicuously absent is attention to the new states which have achieved independence, the heroes of either ancient or contemporary Black Africa, and general African affairs.

Other significant areas are either omitted or treated in special ways. While there are lengthy sections describing the structure of the Republic's Government, which pupils study each year for four

years, there is virtually no mention made of the homelands governments except in the seventh and eighth grades; and there it represents less than ten percent of the pages of the syllabus. The sections dealing with history give primary attention to the Republic's history, commencing with the establishment of Cape Colony after Jan van Riebeck's arrival in 1652. Only minor sections deal with the African states and cultures of the past several centuries, and these follow the well-known (and historically inaccurate) South African dogma that European and African migrants moved simultaneously into uninhabited hinterland. The wars between Africans and Europeans are treated cursorily; and, in each case, the emphasis is on African treachery and misunderstanding of European motives and actions.

Instructions to the teacher for covering local history in the fifth grade are typical:

Local history of tribe or ethnic group, with reference to Bantu praise songs, the name of a chief, festivals, monuments, places of historical emphasis, etc., short descriptions should be given of one or two outstanding events in the history of the tribe or ethnic group selected for treatment, e.g., the National Suicide of the Amaxhosa, Ntsikana's conversion, Dingaan's Kraal, Moroko, and the Voortrekkers, Thaba Bosiu, the Fort at Botshabelo, Soshangana's invasions, Ruins in Vendale, etc.

The entire treatment of history in the syllabi is classically Eurocentric. It follows an evolutionary assumption, by which peoples develop from savagery to modern, Western civilization. Where African historical events and processes are covered, they are placed within a framework of white pacification, building of a civilized South African society, and spreading the fruits of that civilization to the less developed Africans.

One last example will suffice to document the point that the design of Bantu Education is political socialization toward white-defined goals; it derives from the geography syllabus for Higher Primary School. I quote selectively from the topics to be covered and the instructions to the teacher:

. . . Local supplies: how the people who live in the Province, particularly the Bantu, obtain supplies of, and help in the

production of, the following: the chief agricultural products of each region . . . the chief raw materials and minerals used in factories. . . . Imported supplies: mention not more than ten examples to show how the people of the Province are dependent upon other provinces and countries for food-stuffs, fuel, raw materials and manufactured products. . . .

Development projects in the Bantu areas: Irrigation, forestry, agriculture, mining, processing factories (*e.g.*, jam, canned fruit, soap), etc. *Note:* Although each climatic region should be treated separately to show how its development has been affected by physical factors such as build, climate, etc., the interdependence of the various regions should be emphasized. . . .

. . . The effect of mining, commerce, and industry on the life of the Bantu: the creation of opportunities for work; new professions and trades; movement of people into cities; need for influx control.

I suggest that these examples, drawn from a detailed study of the administrative regulations and official syllabi of Bantu Education, make it clear that its broad purpose is not separate development but, rather, to provide the knowledge and political socialization deemed requisite by the Government for indefinite African participation in the Republic's white-controlled socio-economic system. The individual end-product of Bantu Education is evidently intended to include the following skills and traits that fit the African for his or her role: a basic working knowledge of Afrikaans and English; a broad understanding of the Republic's governmental structure and laws, especially as they relate to Africans; a general understanding of the economic system of modern South Africa and the African dependence on and role in it; a view of the European community as that which has brought peace, progress, knowledge, medicine, and the benefits of civilization to South Africa; and personal qualities of submissiveness, acceptance of a work role, respect for authority, neatness, courtesy, honesty, and acceptance of the existing order of things as divinely ordained.

If this portrayal of Bantu Education is correct, it is of both intellectual and immediate interest to ask whether it is achieving what it was designed for.

Less than a year ago, a casual, outside observer, lacking any detailed knowledge of the attitudinal and political dynamics at work

within African society, might have been forgiven for concluding that Bantu Education was working. Urbanization, industrialization, and general economic growth have been proceeding apace, and Africans have competently borne the lion's share of work in that expanding system. There has been considerable evidence that a new African middle class has appeared, upwardly mobile within the tight constraints of South African law and practice, and more intent on making it within the system than with expressing discontent. The two principal African political movements have long been outlawed, and any contact they have had within the Republic has been known only to them and their secret followers. Only within the labor unions and at the black universities has there been significant organized expression of African dissatisfaction, and even the labor unions have appeared to express their dissatisfactions within the system, pressing for better pay and working conditions rather than calling for outright challenge to the existing order.

Significantly, however, the public pronouncements of student leaders in the South African Student Organization, itself the creation of a generation of university students educated almost wholly within the Bantu Education structure, suggests that the messages which Bantu Education is designed to convey are not being received and accepted universally. SASO is a militant entity akin in many ways to militant Afro-American student organizations of the late 1960s, speaking in terms that are wholly contradictory to those Bantu Education was apparently designed to impart.

Regrettably, at least to a sympathetic scholar, there is little if any opportunity to undertake the kind of serious study that is needed to understand precisely how effective Bantu Education is, why it is not effective in many cases, and how students are able to emerge from it with ideas and convictions that Bantu Education was designed to abort. The South African Government welcomes no scholar in this sensitive field, and even Government analysts appear to be so caught up in their own rhetoric and assumptions that they are little interested in these questions. I am currently in the process of studying a commission report, done under Government auspices, of the riots and disturbances at the University of the North in 1974, and it is all too apparent that its authors did their work with such biased as-

sumptions and stereotypes that they failed to understand what motivates discontented black students and what educational processes are at work among these students.

The student unrest in South Africa, which began in 1975 and has finally helped to focus international attention on African dissatisfaction, began with students whose entire schooling was under Bantu Education. After twenty-two years of Bantu Education, students rebelled when the Department of Bantu Education tried to require that Afrikaans be used as the medium of instruction in African schools near Johannesburg. These students, pushed beyond their limit of tolerance and encouraged by an awareness of black gains in Angola, Mozambique, and Guinea Bissau—topics in current affairs which are not taught in Bantu Education schools—have shown an ability to sustain a level of protest greater than any other in modern South African history.

If I may end on a note of speculation, I would submit that the SASO pronouncements and actions and the protests currently being led by students provide strong evidence that Bantu Education is not wholly effective in moving African students toward the white-posited goals of political socialization. Further, I would predict that events over the next few years will show that its role in political socialization will be more the reverse of what was intended, that it will prove to have provided Africans with knowledge, skills, and values they can use to fight the South African system rather than to participate submissively in it. I do not contend that it will have done this with great effectiveness because it is not, actually, a very good system of education by any criteria. But the things it is providing African students, even in a mediocre way, are as useful to Africans in fighting against the system as in participating contentedly in it.

My reason for speculating in this vein and for having the confidence to make these predictions is not simply what SASO has done and what secondary students are currently doing. It is, rather, my conviction that no system of education can carry out an externally imposed mission which is at variance with other forces at work in society. The vast sweep of Western-originated technological cultural diffusion, based on a system of scientific, materialistic thought and a popular quest for material possessions and access to the artifacts

and statuses associated with modernity, affects Africans in South Africa powerfully. More than most other peoples in Africa, they see its manifestations all around them; and they participate, however disadvantageously, in it.

Bantu Education seems to have been constructed to freeze Africans in a certain mold, to give them what was minimally necessary to serve the white system but not enough to challenge the Whites for control of it. That is asking education to do the impossible. It is a universal mechanism for transmitting a cultural heritage; and, in a rapidly changing society, it can be a highly effective instrument for equipping individuals to participate in their society's process of change. It is unlikely to be effective if it is used to counteract processes of change or to turn a society's youth away from a direction toward which they are being moved by other powerful social and historical forces.